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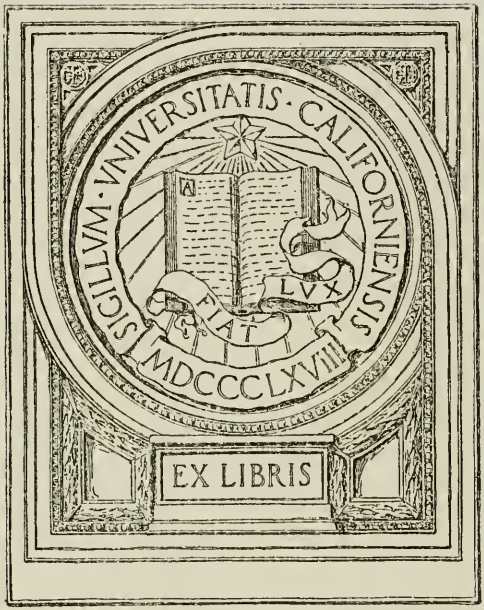

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Welfare

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Welfare Supervision

IN

Factories and Workshops.

ISSUED BY THE HOME OFFICE.

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Welfare and Welfare Supervision in Factories and Workshops.

The object of this pamphlet is to provide employers with an outline of welfare work in factories, to indicate the principles on which it should be based, and to promote a consideration of the subject by employers generally.

Welfare work is sometimes spoken of as if it were an invention of the War. This was not, of course, the case. Many employers were carrying on such work before the War with great success, but it was during the War, and as a result of the special conditions of employment to which the War gave rise, that its value has come to be widely recognised.

The close of the War and the transition to peace conditions of industry make it opportune for employers to review and consolidate their welfare arrangements, or, where no definite arrangements have yet been made, to consider their introduction. The arrangements made during the War were necessarily carried through hurriedly under the great pressure of the urgent problems produced by the introduction of large numbers of women into industry. Much of the work was experimental and mistakes were unavoidable. Much useful experience, however, has been obtained and this experience should now be applied in placing welfare work on a sound and permanent footing. The need for welfare work will not disappear with the War. If the needs of the Nation in War and the necessity for utilising to the best advantage the man and woman power of the Nation and safeguarding its efficiency called for a great development of welfare work, the needs of the Nation in the period following the War when the wastage of man-power has to be met, the arrears in normal production made good, and the industries of the country placed on a firmer foundation, will make such work even more important in the future. It must be regarded now as a permanent element in factory organization and management, and a statutory basis has been given to it by Section 7 of the Police, Factories, &c., Act, 1916, and the Home Office Orders which are being issued under that section.

WHAT IS WELFARE WORK?

Welfare work may be defined shortly as the provision by the management for the worker of the best conditions of employment. The best work and the maximum production can only be obtained where the conditions are the best, and it has become generally recognised that the provision and maintenance of such conditions are an essential part of efficient management. In some measure, of course, the management is placed under a statutory obligation in the matter. The Factory Acts lay down certain requirements in regard to the conditions of work, but their requirements do not do more than

specify a general minimum to be attained in all circumstances. Welfare work has a wider scope. It may be regarded as including everything which bears on the health, safety and general well-being and efficiency of the worker, while avoiding any interference with his private affairs. The chief matters which will require the attention of the welfare management under each of these three heads are indicated briefly in the following paragraphs but the list must not be regarded as exhaustive of all the possibilities of welfare work. It may, perhaps, be said here that, if welfare work is to be successful, it must be undertaken by the management, not merely as a means to efficiency and maximum production, but as being the duty which is owed to all those who are associated as workers or officials in carrying on the Nation's work.

1. General Health.

This includes a number of matters that have long been the subject of statutory regulations which indicate the provisions necessary for the health of the worker. Such matters are, **ventilation, heating, cleanliness, sanitary conveniences.** Even here there is ample scope for welfare work. Maintenance of the standards fixed is often difficult or impossible without special and constant care, and proper organization and supervision.

There are other matters, however, also the subject of statutory regulation, where the standard set is not regarded now as adequate or does not altogether cover the ground, and there are others where there is no standard at present fixed. For example,

Spacing of the work and workers.—Under the Factory Act a space of not less than 250 cubic feet (or 400 cubic feet during overtime) must be provided for each person employed; but in modern factories it is usual to allow a working space considerably in excess of this standard. Moreover, it is not sufficient merely to consider the total cubic capacity of the room in relation to the total number of persons employed. The work, and the workers, should be so arranged as to take full advantage of the space available. In particular, workers should not be huddled together or placed facing one another at narrow benches; apart from the discomfort caused, the danger of the spread of infection *e.g.*, by a tuberculous worker is greatly increased.

Lighting.*—It is particularly important that attention should always be given both to the distribution of the light, whether natural or artificial, in relation to the work, and to the arrangement of the work so as to use the light available to the best advantage. Lighting must be adequate, and should provide a reasonable degree of constancy and uniformity of illumination over the area of work. Lamps should always be so placed as to

* For fuller information on this subject, reference should be made to the Report of the Departmental Committee on Lighting in Factories and Workshops (Cd. 8,000), to be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office at the addresses mentioned on the cover, price 11*d*. A separate pamphlet on this subject is in preparation and will be issued by the Home Office shortly.

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guard against glare in the eyes of the operator, and to avoid the casting of extraneous shadows on the work.

2. *Prevention of Fatigue.*

This is really a branch of General Health, but as it raises many important questions, some of which affect the whole management of the industry, it is more convenient to deal with it separately. Such questions are the length of the working day, the length of the spells, the arrangement of intervals and pauses, the hour of commencing work (whether before or after breakfast), the weekly half-day, holidays and so forth. Right arrangements in regard to these matters form the foundation on which welfare work has to be built. These questions are now being widely discussed in the different industries. Hours and spells have too often been fixed in the past merely in conformity with trade customs or local conditions, and without regard to the nature of the operation performed or the fatigue involved. In point of fact it is impossible to select any one system of working as being applicable to all kinds of work, and the best schemes of hours can only be evolved by observation and experiment at the works and by scientific investigation into the question of the causation and prevention of fatigue. A special Authority, the Industrial Fatigue Research Board*, has recently been set up by the Government to carry out such investigations, and the Board are prepared to assist employers in the consideration of these problems.

Besides these larger questions there are many minor matters which have a bearing on the production of fatigue, and which should receive attention. For example,

Facilities for sitting and rest.—Unnecessary fatigue is often incurred through constant standing. It is better that, if practicable, work should be done sitting rather than standing. Even where the work has to be done standing there are in most cases some intervals when the workers have opportunities for sitting, and so obtaining a short rest; and sufficient and suitable provision (if possible, close to the work) should be made for them to do so. Where work is done sitting, careful consideration should be given to the kind of seat provided, and to its proper adjustment to the work, or to the table, bench, &c. at which the work is done. Employers are referred for more detailed information to the Home Office Memorandum on this subject.†

Labour saving appliances.—Fatigue is often caused by much unnecessary lifting and carrying of heavy weights. The elimination of all such unnecessary work should be made the subject of careful study by the works management. It can often be avoided by a judicious arrangement of the machinery or plant; but where heavy weights must be lifted

* Communications may be addressed to the Secretary, 15, Great George Street, S.W. 1.

† In preparation. Copies will be obtainable on application to H.M. Inspectors of Factories, or from H.M. Stationery Office at the addresses mentioned on the cover.

and moved, the introduction of overhead runways, hoists, or other lifting tackle, and the use of suitable carriers ought to be arranged for.

3. *Safety.*

Prevention of accidents.—It would not be possible within the limits of this memorandum to deal with the safeguarding of machinery, the adoption of safety devices and other measures for preventing accidents. Reference should be made to the provisions of the Factory Acts on these matters, the reports and memoranda issued by the Home Office, and other publications. The special attention of employers, however, is drawn to the institution of Safety Committees—*see* the Home Office memorandum on this subject, which is printed in the Appendix to this pamphlet. Generally speaking, the prevention of accidents will be a duty devolving upon the engineering or technical branch of the management rather than on the welfare branch.

First aid and ambulance.*—Some Orders have already been issued by the Home Office on this subject for trades in which the accident rate is high, but arrangements for prompt attention to injuries are necessary in *every* factory. There should always be available a sufficient supply of sterilised dressings, kept in the charge of some person with a knowledge of First Aid treatment. In large factories more elaborate arrangements with a well-fitted ambulance room are desirable. Reference may be made to the provisions of the Orders already issued, *e.g.*, the Order of 12th October, 1917, for Blast Furnaces, Foundries and other works.

4. *General Well-being and Efficiency of the Worker.*

(*a*) **Drinking-water.**—An Order has been issued by the Home Office which requires that in all factories or workshops in which more than 25 persons are employed the occupier shall provide and maintain at suitable points, conveniently accessible to the workers, an adequate supply of wholesome drinking-water, together with a suitable cup or drinking vessel at each point of supply.

It is desirable of course to avoid putting the supply in places where the water in the pipes or in the vessel containing the water is liable to become tepid through heat from the works, or in the open air or other position where the worker will be exposed to cold or wet when he goes for water.

The best facilities for drinking are afforded by the upward fountain-jet. By this plan the need for a drinking vessel is avoided, since the worker drinks directly from the jet. Where jets are not provided, the water should, if practicable, be laid on in pipes rather than kept in vessels.

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* A pamphlet dealing fully with the subject is now in course of preparation and will be issued shortly

(*b*) **Mess-rooms and Canteens.**—The need for the provision of mess-rooms and canteens has become widely recognised, and there is probably no branch of welfare work which is more necessary. Good work cannot be expected from workers who have no adequate opportunity for obtaining food and refreshment. A mess-room ought to be a suitable and pleasant room set apart for the purpose and sufficiently furnished with suitable tables and seats, and adequate means of cooking or heating food and boiling water. It need not be an elaborate undertaking; attractive and successful mess-rooms can frequently be provided, more particularly in small factories, on very simple lines. In larger works it will often be desirable to provide a canteen, where a hot meal, freshly cooked, can be served. Such a meal conduces to much better work, particularly during cold weather, and it is not much more trouble to cook a meal than to heat up a large number of miscellaneous meals brought by the workers. A canteen is specially desirable if any considerable number of the workers live at a distance. Employers desiring fuller information on this subject should consult the pamphlet issued by the Liquor Traffic Control Board and entitled "Feeding the Munition Worker,"* or that issued by the Home Office, entitled, "Mess-rooms and Canteens at Small Factories and Workshops."†

Attention may be called here to the practice that is now being adopted in many works, with good results in diminishing fatigue and promoting efficiency, of taking round refreshment (tea, coffee, &c.) to the workers in the course of the morning and afternoon spells, or allowing a brief interval for the workers to obtain such refreshments in the mess-rooms or canteens.

(*c*) **Protective Clothing.**—The need for protective clothing may arise from different causes, such as (1) dusty and dirty processes; (2) working in proximity to dangerous machinery, climbing ladders, &c.; (3) use of acid and caustic liquids; (4) wet processes; (5) excessive heat; (6) exposure to weather. It is obvious that different kinds of clothing will be needed according to the nature of the employment. The question is discussed fully in the memorandum‡ published by the Home Office on the subject, wherein different types of clothing are illustrated, and some indication is given of the kinds of processes in which protective clothing ought to be provided. Adequate arrangements should of course be made by the employer for keeping the clothing clean and in good repair.

(*d*) **Cloak-room Accommodation.**—It conduces greatly to the comfort and well-being of the workers if they are provided

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* To be purchased from H.M. Stationery Office at the addresses given on the cover of this pamphlet, price 6d.

† To be obtained on application to H.M. Inspectors of Factories, or from H.M. Stationery Office at the addresses mentioned on the cover, price 3*d*.

‡ Protective Clothing for Women and Girl Workers in Factories and Workshops, to be obtained on application to H.M. Inspectors of Factories, or from H.M. Stationery Office at the addresses mentioned on the cover, price 3*d*.

with suitable facilities for changing clothes and boots and for drying wet outdoor clothes in bad weather, or overalls used in wet processes. A simple and effective means of drying clothes is to place steam pipes under the hanging pegs. Lockers for each person are much appreciated and are often provided. Each peg or locker should bear the worker's number or name. It is important that the cloak-room should be in charge of some responsible person, and that measures should be taken to guard against pilfering. Where lockers are provided each worker can have his or her own key. Another convenient arrangement is to have the pegs attached to a suspended bar, which can be drawn up out of reach during the absence of the workers.

Through ventilation in the room where clothes are dried is desirable.

(*e*) **Washing Conveniences.**—Though accommodation of this kind is more particularly required in dusty or hot processes or when poisonous substances enter into the process of manufacture, its value in promoting health and personal efficiency generally should not be overlooked. A much more general provision of washing conveniences is needed. The installation should be provided with an adequate supply of hot and cold water, towels, soap and nail-brushes. It should be as simple as possible, strong and durable, and so constructed that it can be easily cleaned. It should be situated in positions conveniently accessible to all for whom it is provided. It is desirable too that accommodation should always be provided in close proximity to the mess-room or canteen.

In addition to ordinary washing accommodation the provision of baths, either a shower-bath or slipper-bath, is most desirable in industries where workers are exposed to great heat or excessive dust.

For fuller information on this subject employers are referred to Memorandum No. 14,* issued by the Health of Munition Workers' Committee.

SELECTION OF THE WORKER.

Another important matter calling for the attention of the management is the suitability of the individual worker for the work to which they are assigned, in respect of health, strength, sight, intelligence, &c. This calls for careful selection of the worker for the job in the first instance, and for supervision and observation of the worker after appointment. The amount of time lost by workers, their absences from work through sickness, &c., often throw light on the question of a worker's fitness, and a system under which careful records on these points are kept in respect of all the workers has been found to be very valuable to the management. By these methods the employment of indivi-

* "Washing Facilities and Baths" (Cd. 8387) to be obtained from H.M. Stationery Office at the addresses named on the cover of this pamphlet, price 1d.

duals on work beyond their strength or capacity, or unsuited to the worker on some other ground, can often be prevented, and defects in the conditions of work which are prejudicial to health or efficiency may be discovered. For instance, it may be found that unnecessary fatigue is being caused by the faulty adjustment of the work benches or seats, that strain is being caused by the worker having to list or move excessive weights, and so on.

The arrangements to be made for such selection and observation will vary according to the size and organisation of the factory, the nature of the processes used and other circumstances. Many large works or works where arduous or unhealthy processes are carried on are now appointing works doctors who visit the works periodically or a special arrangement is made with the certifying factory surgeon on the same lines. This is an important development which has received a great stimulus during the War. The duties of such doctors include the examination of workers, especially of those engaged in exacting work or unhealthy processes; advising on the cases of particular workers as to the class of work to be assigned to them or the conditions of their work; the supervision of the First Aid and Ambulance equipment and its use; examination of the sickness and accident records to see if there is excessive incidence from any particular cause (*e.g.*, sepsis in accident cases) or among persons engaged in particular processes. Where a works doctor is employed, all cases in which any doubt is felt as to the worker's fitness for a particular kind of work would be referred to him before engagement by the official charged with the duty of engaging the workers or supervising them after appointment.

In the selection of juvenile workers, the employer may find it useful to consult the Juvenile Employment Committee for his district. Information as to these Committees can be obtained from the local Employment Exchange.

OUTSIDE WELFARE.

It does not lie within the scope of this pamphlet to deal with the subject of welfare work outside the factories, including such matters as the provision of clubs, facilities for recreation, &c., but there are some matters in the life of the worker outside the works which are of importance as having a direct relation to the worker's life in the factory, and which should receive attention by the employer, for instance:—

Transport of Workers to and from the Factory.—Difficulty and discomfort in travelling to and from work often add greatly to the fatigue of the worker and lengthen the hours of his or her working life. The subject of travelling facilities is one that should engage the attention therefore of the management. It may be possible to make special arrangements with tramway, omnibus and railway companies. Crush at starting and stopping times may be avoided by having different times for different departments and by arrangements with neighbouring

works. Workers who have to come long distances and may have to make a very early start from home should be specially considered; if possible, arrangements should be made to enable them, before starting work, to get refreshment, dry their clothes and rest.

In dealing with any matter of outside welfare, it is essential to avoid even the suspicion of interfering with the worker's private life. Factory welfare workers should be specially warned against this.

CO-OPERATION OF THE WORKERS.

Welfare work, to be successful, must carry with it the consent and good will of the workers and secure their co-operation. It is desirable, as far as possible, to associate the workers with the management of the welfare arrangements. Where a Works Committee exists this should be one of the Committee's functions; in some cases it may be well to form a special Welfare Committee or Committees for particular purposes, *e.g.*, the management of the canteen.

ORGANIZATION OF WELFARE WORK.

The arrangements will necessarily vary in different factories according to size of factory, nature of work, class of workers employed, and other circumstances. In all cases, however, it is **essential** that the responsibility for each branch of welfare work should be definitely assigned to some qualified person. Some duties it may be more convenient to assign to officials in charge of departments, foremen, forewomen, &c., but generally speaking the best arrangement is to assign the responsibility for the welfare work in a factory, especially such as is common to the whole works (canteen, first aid, &c.) to some official specially selected for the purpose and free to devote his or her full time to the work. In very small works it may be found possible to combine all the different duties with other duties of management in the hands of a single official or the manager himself. In large works, on the other hand, more than one special official will probably be necessary as the work develops, but if so, the different branches of work should be co-ordinated under and supervised by a "supervisor" in chief. These principles apply equally for whatever class of worker welfare work is designed—men, women or boys. Welfare work during the War has developed mainly in works where women are employed—to a growing extent also among boys,* where it has been attended with striking success; but on the lines described in this pamphlet it is, of course, equally required in the case of men workers, and in some factories much work had been done in their case even before the War.

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* A Handbook on welfare work among boys has been published by the Department of Civil Demobilisation and Resettlement of the Ministry of Labour, entitled "Handbook for Welfare Supervisors and Apprentice Masters," and can be obtained from the Ministry.

It is essential to the success of welfare work in a factory that it should be regarded as a distinct and definite part of the management. The official in charge of it should have a definite position in the management, with definite duties and authority, and should be in direct touch with the Employer or Managing Director. There should be a clear understanding as to his or her relations to the other branches of management.

No attempt is made in this pamphlet to indicate all the duties of a welfare supervisor. Much of the best work done by a supervisor is personal work and cannot be summarized.

THE WELFARE SUPERVISOR.

"**Welfare Supervisor**" is the name by which the official who is in charge of welfare work or any branch of welfare work is now generally known. This class of official has come into existence during the War, and mainly in the munitions and controlled factories, and factories working under special Orders as to hours, where large numbers of women have been employed. The selection of this official is important. Except in special circumstances no persons should be appointed to the post in any large works unless they have had special training or experience in the work and the employer is satisfied that they have the necessary qualifications for the work. The knowledge of the best conditions of work, the best methods of promoting the welfare of the workers, is expert or specialised knowledge which cannot be acquired without training and experience. Before the War few persons with special experience or training in welfare work were available, and with the great demand brought by the War, unsuitable persons were appointed in some cases with results which are still prejudicing welfare work in the eyes of the workers. With the closing down of munitions work a number of trained women are becoming available.

QUALIFICATIONS OF SUPERVISORS.

It is evident that the qualifications required will vary widely in different factories according to the size and character of the works, and it is impossible to lay down very definite standards. Certain general qualifications, however, can be indicated which every Supervisor should possess. In the first place, there are the personal qualities, which may be summed up under the word "character" or "personality," and on which success or failure largely depend.

(*a*) The supervisor must, in the first place, be a person who is able to earn the respect of both employers and workers. In a small factory the superior type of forewoman has often proved herself highly satisfactory; in larger works a higher educational standard will generally be required, according as the responsibility placed upon the officer increases. In all cases, however, the person selected should be someone who naturally stands out amongst his or her fellows.

(*b*) The supervisor, who will constantly be coming into contact with other branches of the management, must have tact and judgment to know how to avoid friction and deal with difficulties that may arise with foremen and under-managers through possible conflict of duties.

(*c*) The supervisor must take a real interest in the work, be quick to observe defects, and possess initiative and capacity to formulate and carry through plans for improving working conditions.

To these personal qualities must be added knowledge of industrial conditions, and of the conditions under which the workers live. This knowledge can only be gained by actual experience of work in a factory and intercourse with the workers themselves in factories, clubs, and elsewhere.

These are the general qualifications necessary, but it is obvious that in addition other technical qualifications are desirable, and even necessary, in large works where elaborate schemes of welfare are adopted, *e.g.*, a knowledge of household and domestic science, some practical acquaintance with factory hygiene, experience in First Aid and elementary nursing. In large works, too, where there are Assistant Supervisors, nurses, and others working under the Supervisor, powers of organisation, experience in the keeping of records and in office routine, and a general knowledge of industrial and social organisation are required.

For these qualifications, preliminary training is almost always essential.

TRAINING OF SUPERVISORS.

The question of training has been carefully considered. The two principal ways in which adequate training for the duties of a Supervisor can be got are:—

(1) by serving an apprenticeship for some considerable period in a factory under a competent supervisor;

(2) by taking one of the special courses of training which are now provided in many industrial centres. A list of these can be obtained from the Home Office, the Inspectors of Factories, the Secretary of the Joint University Council for Social Studies or the Central Association of Welfare Workers, 11, Adam Street, Adelphi, London, W.C.2. These courses have been so arranged as to combine a study of industrial conditions, &c., with visits of observation to factories and actual practical work in a factory. The subjects which a student is required to take in these courses (as distinguished from the practical work) vary to some extent, but they all aim at giving the future welfare supervisor a general

grounding in and familiarity with the following subjects:—

(*a*) Industrial life and social studies.
(*b*) Factory organisation and industrial law.
(*c*) General conditions of the maintenance of health.
(*d*) Special conditions upon which the maintenance of health in the factory depends.
(*e*) Duties of Welfare Supervisor.

A diploma or certificate is given to those who complete the course satisfactorily, but is not awarded unless the reports of those who have supervised the candidate's work, including the practical work in a factory, show that he or she is suitable for the post of Welfare Supervisor.

Employers are strongly recommended to make it a condition of appointment that the applicant, unless qualified by such an apprenticeship as is mentioned under (1) above, takes one of the courses of training before taking up the appointment.

For a fuller consideration of this question, reference may be made to a "Report upon the Selection and Training of Welfare Supervisors in Factories and Workshops". (published by P. S. King and Son, Ltd., 1, Orchard House, Westminster, S.W.1, price 3*d*.), which was prepared by an unofficial committee appointed at a conference held at the Home Office in 1917. The following extract is taken from this report:—

"It is essential to the future progress of Welfare Work that the Welfare Worker should be capable of dealing in a broad and enlightened spirit with a number of complex subjects. Experience has shown that the employer in many cases looks to the Welfare Supervisor for assistance, among other problems, in the selection of suitable workers, in questions of technical education, in the question of the relation of fatigue to efficiency, and in questions of labour organisation. The Welfare Worker who is to do his or her duty satisfactorily requires a thorough preliminary groundwork of social knowledge such as is given in the University Social Study Courses. A short intensive course in Welfare Work might enable the student to master the actual technique of Welfare Work, but would fail to give such an all-round training as would qualify the student for the increased responsibility which is likely to fall upon the Welfare Supervisor as the work develops. At the same time, the Committee is fully conscious that there is a considerable amount of specialised knowledge which is indispensable for the Welfare Supervisor."

REGISTER OF SUPERVISORS.

Arrangements are being made by the Ministry of Labour to form locally and centrally, in connexion with their Professional Register, a special register of persons seeking employment as

Welfare Supervisors. This register will contain full particulars of the education and training of the candidates, of their general industrial experience and their specialised experience in welfare work.

Employers desiring to appoint a Welfare Supervisor are advised therefore to consult the local Divisional Officer of the Employment Department of the Ministry of Labour or the Professional Women's Register, Ministry of Labour, 16, Curzon Street, London, W.1.

RECORDS.

While in general it is not to be expected that the results of welfare work can be tabulated, there are certain matters capable of statistical record, on which such work will have an important bearing and may be expected to exert a strong influence—for instance, on such matters as loss of time by workers, absences from work through sickness, fatigue, &c., accidents, labour wastage or turnover. It is suggested that careful works records should be kept with regard to all these matters, and while other causes will exert an influence also, it should be possible to trace distinctly the beneficial effects of welfare work.

CONSULTATION BETWEEN EMPLOYERS.

In welfare work much can be learned from the experience of other works. It is suggested to Employers and Employers' Associations that the consideration of questions of welfare should form a regular part of the functions of Associations, Chambers of Trade, &c., and as the questions are largely the same in the different industries, and as in regard to some matters there is also room for co-operation and united action between employers in the same locality, that these questions should be considered in local and district meetings of the employers. A Central Association of Welfare Supervisors has been formed, with local branches, at whose meetings welfare questions are discussed from time to time, and these meetings are frequently attended by employers.*

It is also suggested that much valuable work might be done by employers who have successfully carried through schemes of welfare, if they would bring to the notice of other employers, either at local meetings or in association meetings, particulars of their schemes and the results.

There will be many questions arising in connection with the organisation and development of welfare work which could be discussed with great advantage between the employers' and workers' representatives on the Joint Industrial Councils. Some Councils have already appointed Committees to consider such questions.

* Particulars may be obtained from the Secretary to the Association, 11, Adam Street, Adelphi, London, W.C. 2.

APPENDIX.

SAFETY COMMITTEES IN FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

For many years a great amount of attention has been given by the Home Office to the fencing of machinery and the provision of safeguards against accidents in general, and considerable advances have been made in preventing the more serious classes of machinery accidents. This has been effected mainly by standardising precautions through statutory regulations or agreements reached after conferences with the industries, by continuous administrative action on the part of the Inspectors of Factories, by greater attention to safety on the part of the designers and manufacturers of machinery, and in other ways.

Nevertheless, in spite of all the efforts that have been made the yearly roll of industrial accidents is still a long one. In 1914, 969 persons were killed and 147,045 persons were injured by accidents in the factories and workshops of this country. If to these figures were added the accidents in mines, quarries, building and other constructional work, and railways, the total would be much more than doubled. These figures represent an enormous loss to the nation, to the industries, and to the workers themselves.

It is of the first importance to the country, both during the war and also during the period of reconstruction after the war, that this great cause of waste and loss of efficiency in our industrial organisation should be as far as possible removed.

It is evident that this will never be done by improved methods of fencing, statutory regulations, or administrative action *alone*. Notwithstanding all that has been done, machinery accidents due to carelessness or neglect on the part of officials and workers alike to maintain or use the guards provided are of daily occurrence. It is also perhaps not generally realised that machinery is responsible for only a minority of the accidents which occur in factories and workshops. The Home Office records show that more than two-thirds of such accidents are due to other causes. The annual reports of the Home Office Inspectors regularly show that a great number of accidents are due simply and solely to carelessness, inattention, and want of thought. It has been estimated that the percentage of avoidable accidents in some industries is as much as 60 per cent.

There is no doubt that a large reduction in the number of accidents would be brought about if managers, officials and workers in factories were determined that avoidable accidents should be prevented and would co-operate in taking the steps necessary to prevent them. Experiments have already been made in many factories in this country which show that most satisfactory results can be achieved by the joint action of employers and workers.

The following description of what has been done in a large factory in the North of England is given in order show by a concrete example the kind of methods which may be adopted for the purpose. Departmental Committees were established some years ago in the works with the primary object of encouraging the workpeople to make suggestions with respect to their work or conditions of employment. Each Committee was composed of a certain number of employees nominated by the Firm and an equal number elected by the workpeople themselves. It was found that many useful suggestions were received with regard to the guarding of machinery and other safety devices.

This step led on to the formation of Accident Enquiry Committees, similarly constituted, for the various departments of work. Their chief duties were (1) to enquire into and report on all accidents that occurred in their departments and to make recommendations, if possible, to prevent their recurrence, and (2) to nominate quarterly two members to make regular inspections of the departments along with the department manager and a foreman, to point out defects, and to make such recommendations for the prevention of accidents as they considered desirable. This system of inspection was found to be of great practical usefulness,

and the reports of the Committees on the accidents investigated had an excellent effect on the workers, especially in those cases proved to be due to carelessness or negligence. The workers' representatives retire after six months' service and are not eligible for re-election for a further period of twelve months. In this way a large number of the workers in each department are trained in the way of accident prevention and acquire the "safety" attitude, and their example and influence have very beneficial effects upon their fellow-workers.*

As a result of these steps the number of accidents in the works was greatly reduced, but the firm felt that more could still be done. About two years ago a more extensive "Safety First" scheme was put into operation, of which the chief feature was the appointment of a Safety Inspector to supervise all the accident prevention measures.

The Safety Inspector is in close touch with the manager or foreman in each department. He attends the meetings of all the Committees when an accident enquiry is being held or matters relating to safety are being discussed. He inspects the various sections, usually with the respective manager or foreman; he also studies the working of new machines with a view to detecting sources of danger and suggesting remedies. By carrying out his duties with tact and discretion, he very soon obtained the necessary confidence and support of all concerned.

For the purpose of keeping the question of "safety" prominently before the workpeople, notices and warnings, together with a set of general safety rules, are exhibited throughout the sections and especially in parts of the works where special care is necessary. The notices and warnings are varied from time to time so as to attract more attention.

In the view of the firm, the education of the worker is the main factor in the reduction of preventable accidents. It is no use merely *telling* workers to be careful. They must be shown how to avoid accidents; they must be made to understand that the employers are in earnest in their intention to prevent accidents, and in every possible way the safety attitude must be inculcated. At the same time, the sympathy, help and co-operation of the management, and the officials and foremen, are essential to the development of "safety" principles and practice, and must be actively promoted by the employer if success is to be attained.

The result of these new measures has been in a single year to reduce the number of accidents in the works by more than 50 per cent.

This brief description of what can be done in the way of accident prevention in a factory by the earnest endeavours and close co-operation of all concerned is issued, with the consent of the Firm referred to, in order to bring the matter to the attention of occupiers of other factories and to induce them to take up the question of "safety" in their works in a similar way. Even in small factories a scheme on similar, though necessarily simpler, lines might be introduced with great advantage.

Where a Works Committee representative of the management and the workers has been established, it will probably be convenient that the safety duties indicated above should form part of its functions.

September, 1918.

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* At the same time an ambulance or First Aid brigade was established, the members of which were selected from the various departments and thoroughly trained in First Aid work. They wear a distinctive badge, and in order that they may keep up to date they are re-examined in First Aid work each year.

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By Darling & Son, Ltd., Bacon Street, E.2.

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